

Concordia Seminary - Saint Louis

## Scholarly Resources from Concordia Seminary

---

Bachelor of Divinity

Concordia Seminary Scholarship

---

5-1-1924

### The Trichotomy (of Soul, Mind, Body) According to Scripture

Richard Albert Jesse

Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, [ir\\_jesser@csl.edu](mailto:ir_jesser@csl.edu)

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholar.csl.edu/bdiv>



Part of the [Religious Thought, Theology and Philosophy of Religion Commons](#)

---

#### Recommended Citation

Jesse, Richard Albert, "The Trichotomy (of Soul, Mind, Body) According to Scripture" (1924). *Bachelor of Divinity*. 680.

<https://scholar.csl.edu/bdiv/680>

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Concordia Seminary Scholarship at Scholarly Resources from Concordia Seminary. It has been accepted for inclusion in Bachelor of Divinity by an authorized administrator of Scholarly Resources from Concordia Seminary. For more information, please contact [seitzw@csl.edu](mailto:seitzw@csl.edu).

THE TRICHOTOMY  
(OF SOUL, MIND, BODY)  
ACCORDING TO SCRIPTURE

A Thesis presented to the  
Faculty of Concordia Theological Seminary  
in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of  
Bachelor of Divinity

by  
R. Jesse



The doctrine of trichotomy has been upheld chiefly by the Greek Church, or rather by those claiming membership in that body. The chiefest of the proponents of this doctrine was Apollinaris the Younger, of Laodicea, the opponent, yet friend, of Athanasius. In 381 the second ecumenical council, assembled at Constantinople, declared him and his followers to be heretics, and his Christology to be false doctrine. Apollinaris' teaching was, in a manner of speaking, the complementary to that of Paul of Samosata, for whereas Paul had destroyed the deity of Christ, Apollinaris now proceeded to attack His true humanity. Apollinaris, feeling that two complete and perfect individuals, human and divine, would give rise to a monstrosity, sought to reconcile the two by resorting to Plato's threefold division of man, and maintained that man is composed of the three essential parts: spirit (mind), soul, and body. Since Christ's mind was changeless, whereas man's is extremely unstable, Christ, he said, could not have possessed a human spirit, but that the Logos, which, he maintained, was the mind, or spirit, of God, supplied this deficiency. His argument he based on John 1, 14:  $\epsilon\kappa\epsilon\iota\varsigma\ \epsilon\chi\epsilon\nu\epsilon\tau\omicron$  (not  $\psi\upsilon\chi\eta\ \epsilon\chi\epsilon\nu\epsilon\tau\omicron$ ). For this reason, then, Christ was not perfect man, but only  $\acute{\omega}\varsigma\ \acute{\alpha}\nu\theta\rho\omega\pi\omicron\varsigma$ . As a corollary to this doctrine, it follows easily that, since Christ was not in every sense a perfect man, He could very logically have been sinless, and Apollinaris was quite satisfied intellectually.

It was therefore as a consequence of this controversy that the latent heretical tendencies of the trichotomous doctrine ~~was~~ for the first time fully discovered, and dichotomy was urged by the Church not only as true doctrine, but also as the antidote for this specific heresy. Especially has dichotomy been championed by the Western Church, whose teachers have been, as a rule, advocates of the two element view. This is true also of Luther and the older dogmaticians. While the question is today scarcely a burning issue, yet it seems still to have champions for each side.



A word of explanation here as to the treatment of the subject is in place. Two modes of procedure are possible. In the first place, a mere demonstration of the extreme insecurity of the trichotomous position would have sufficed to settle the issue. The second choice is to establish securely the dichotomous view, incidentally indicating trichotomy's essential weaknesses. The latter course has been the one chosen, pursuant to which the burden of proof has been voluntarily assumed. The contention proposed for establishment therefore is: "Trichotomy, according to Scripture, is false, in view of the fact that the dichotomous conception is the only correct one." The formulation and arrangement of the various points has been adapted from Dr. Graebner's concise treatment of the matter in the Theological Quarterly.

A justifiable liberty has been taken with the strict terminology of the subject as stated. For "mind", the word "soul" has been substituted, this term being used to mean, in almost all instances, "the general manifestation of the vital principle." Exceptions to this will be specially noted. For the "soul" of the subject as stated, the word "spirit" has been inserted to indicate the life-principle. This is done to avoid confusion, the terminology used coinciding then with that of the Bible, which must constitute the basis of the thesis. The sense of the terms as stated does not, therefore, suffer. Also, the terms to be used can still be so interpreted as to apply even to the Platonic division. Whether or not that can be correctly done will be demonstrated by the establishment of one of the points--the attempt to show that mind and vital principle are a unit. If not, then Plato's contention that they are independent entities will be established. Should the completed thesis be successful, it will ~~will~~ constitute a refutation of every species of trichotomy--both the pagan and the allegedly Christian.

The terms to be involved in the present thesis are chiefly four:  $\kappa\acute{\iota}\nu\eta\sigma\iota\varsigma$  and  $\Pi\acute{\alpha}\nu$ ;  $\psi\upsilon\chi\eta$  and  $\pi\acute{\rho}\nu\epsilon\mu\alpha$ .  $\kappa\acute{\iota}\nu\eta\sigma\iota\varsigma$  and  $\Pi\acute{\alpha}\nu$  both come from



parent verbs that have to do with air in motion.  $\text{נָשָׁם}$ , from which  $\text{נֶשְׁמָה}$  is derived, means to respire, to breathe, and the first meaning of  $\text{נֶשְׁמָה}$  is, therefore, breath. In Gen. 1, 20 it is used to denote the vital principle in animals ( $\text{וַיִּשְׁנָם}$ ), and in Gen. 1, 24 the same expression is used to denote anything that exists or breathes. Is. 42, 1; Cant. 1, 7; 3, 1-4, in which it means the seat of the affections and emotions, are examples of the variety of uses to which this term was put.--- The word  $\text{נָפַח}$  is derived from the verb of the same spelling, which also means to breathe, but in the sense of **exhaling** rather than of respiring; hence, vehemently, to snort, as in anger (Judges 8, 3). It has also the secondary meaning of air in motion, either gently or violently so, and is therefore used to signify either a zephyr or a hurricane.---Both words therefore refer to life within the body, but  $\text{נֶשְׁמָה}$  means properly the life which one is, while  $\text{נָפַח}$  designates the life which one has.

$\psi\upsilon\chi\acute{\nu}$  is the New Testament equivalent of  $\text{נֶשְׁמָה}$ , and is derived from  $\psi\upsilon\chi\omega$ , to blow, and is used much as  $\text{נֶשְׁמָה}$  is in the Old Testament (life, John 10, 11; living being, Acts 1, 42; to represent the immortal as distinguished from the mortal, Matt. 10, 28).  $\pi\nu\epsilon\tilde{\nu}\mu\alpha$  is the New Testament Greek equivalent of  $\text{נָפַח}$ , and means the vital principle by which the body is animated. (Luke 8, 55; 23, 46; etc.)

The present use of soul will always be as a translation of  $\text{נֶשְׁמָה}$  and  $\psi\upsilon\chi\acute{\nu}$ ; spirit will refer to  $\text{נָפַח}$  and  $\pi\nu\epsilon\tilde{\nu}\mu\alpha$ .

The purpose of this thesis is to prove that trichotomy, according to Scripture, is false; that man is composed of two, not three, essential parts, the material and the immaterial. I shall, however, be forced to the proving of an additional assertion, for the trichotomist need not be silenced by the establishment of this statement. He may fly beyond the province of this proof, and maintain that man's incorporeality is dual, consisting of two entities, spirit and soul, and that in view of this, the sum total of essential parts is three. Therefore, the duty of proving the unity of the



immaterial devolves upon me, and upon the establishment or non-establishment of this point the entire argument will stand or fall. However, lest the trichotomist take refuge in the assertion that this view is a priori wrong because it forces Scripture into the position of one who contradicts himself, the obligation of producing a satisfactory explanation of those passages that seem to imply a tripart division of essentials will still remain.

For the establishment of the statement that man consists of only two parts, the material and the immaterial, two propositions will be proven. In the first place, it will be shown that man was so created, without the introduction of any third element; and, in the second, that man so remained and was so considered by inspired writers for thousands of years.

With regard to the creation, Baier's words are, and will always be, in place. "Denique hominem eodem die creavit Deus, corpus quidem eius ex terra, animam vero ex nihilo produciens et corpori conjugens", he says. The passage which he uses, and which will be employed here is the locus classicus, Gen. 2, 7. Into this authoritative formula of ingredients no more than two elements can be forced, no matter who the investigator may be, nor the critical state of his mind. They must forever remain the same--the  $\aleph$   $\beta$   $\gamma$   $\delta$   $\epsilon$   $\zeta$   $\eta$   $\theta$   $\iota$   $\kappa$   $\lambda$   $\mu$   $\nu$   $\xi$   $\omicron$   $\pi$   $\rho$   $\sigma$   $\tau$   $\upsilon$   $\phi$   $\chi$   $\psi$   $\omega$  from which the Creator shaped the frame of man by the special operation of His skilled fingers, and the  $\aleph$   $\beta$   $\gamma$   $\delta$   $\epsilon$   $\zeta$   $\eta$   $\theta$   $\iota$   $\kappa$   $\lambda$   $\mu$   $\nu$   $\xi$   $\omicron$   $\pi$   $\rho$   $\sigma$   $\tau$   $\upsilon$   $\phi$   $\chi$   $\psi$   $\omega$  which proceeded as a breath from the Creator into the inanimate nostrils of the molded earth now fashioned into a receptacle for the abiding of this breath. With the naming of these factors, the one side of the equation is closed. Nothing is added; nothing is subtracted. The equal marks are immediately added, and under the same divine Power, the result, man, springs into being, and the equation is complete, the formula of the Chemist is finished. **Aphar min-haadamah + nishmath chaim = nephesh chaiah.** The motionless hulk that had stretched its lifeless length upon the parent earth, became



now instinct with the thrill of life, and man, the union of two essential parts, assumed his rightful place in the creative scheme as the first living soul belonging to the genus homo.

The Old Testament writers who touch in any way upon this subject display no hesitation whatever, as they would certainly have had they been speaking of what they considered to be a moot question. The reader is impressed by the simple, straightforward directness of their speech. He gains the impression that the issue was never raised, that it was considered so definitely settled as to be beyond the thought of question and as being unworthy of the time and effort of a discussion that must lead back to the same time-honored conclusion. It had been for centuries, one feels, a belief as fundamental as our conviction that two plus two is four. Even [the sophisticated] Solomon, the many-sided man of diverse and multifarious knowledge, in whose mind a question must have arisen had the matter been considered questionable, speaks with accent simple and final: "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit (רוח) shall return unto God who gave it." (Eccl. 12, 7). Job coincides with this opinion, saying that if God "set His heart upon man, if He gather unto Himself his spirit and his breath; all flesh shall perish together, and man shall turn again unto dust." (Job 34, 14, 15). At death man is resolved into his two component parts; the dusty element returns to the earth that gave it birth; the breath of life returns to its Source; and the unit, man, is seen no more by those in whom the union still persists. The chapter is closed; the end is as definitely and unquestionably the dissolution of a unit into a twofoldness as the beginning was the union of a duality of elements into one harmonious whole.

*Psalmists*  
The, as a whole are not as explicit as was Solomon, but still there is apparent in them the same unquestioned conception of man as a being compounded of the material and the immaterial. "My flesh and my heart faileth", cries the Psalmist (73, 26), using "heart" to repre-



sent a side of his being which is manifestly the immaterial, as opposed to his flesh. (Heart, the seat of the emotions, which are, in turn, a characteristic of the immaterial). In Ps. 84, 5 the antithesis is that of "strength" and "heart", patently only expressions for the two elements in man. The twofold division is therefore even unconsciously considered so fundamental and so universal a concept that the idea may be clothed with even the vaguer terminology of poetry and still be capable of being understood by the chanting hosts of Israel.--There is one passage which is, however, quite definite and concise, namely Ps. 104, 29: "Thou takest away their breath, they die, and return to their dust." This is practically a restatement of Solomon's words above (Eccl. 12, 7), and is given as a passage parallel to it.

We have also for consideration the words of Him who was in the beginning, who was the only witness, and who is the Creator of the creature under discussion. He, too, believes that man is two-, and not threefold, for He says (Matt. 10, 28): "Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell." We are, then, not to fear man who can come at only one side of us to destroy it--the corporeal--, but rather are we to fear Him who can fatally attack not only the corporeal, but the incorporeal as well. The threatened Christian, <sup>who is here addressed</sup> must, as a man, therefore be composed of the tangible and the intangible, or the Creator Himself knows not whereof He speaks.

The Apostle Paul, from whom came those passages upon which, in particular, the trichotomists base their claims, also portrays his conception of man as the material-immaterial when he explains the relation of the Holy Spirit to the Church by means of the figure of a man (Eph. 4, 4). The Church he compares to a man's body, and the Spirit to a man's spirit. There is a visible, vivified, patently active part, and there is a vivifying, invisible part. Had he considered man



to be threefold, his use of this simile would have been indefensible, for, in the first place, the figure would have been both incomplete and inappropriate, and, in the second, it would have been misleading. Paul was too fine a rhetorician to be guilty of the first, and too great a teacher to have been culpable ~~of~~ of so gross a pedagogical mistake as the second. We must therefore conclude that, after the manner of a wise and thoughtful teacher, he was making illustrative use of a belief which was a fundamental conviction of his and the common, unquestioned belief of those whom he was addressing.

This bipart division is found also in other places in the Pauline Epistles. In I Cor. 7, 34: "holy both in body and in spirit"; in 2 Cor. 4, 16: "outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day"; in 2 Cor. 7, 1: "filthiness of the flesh and spirit". These are simple statements, as of a simple, generally recognized truth. They are unhesitatingly and unqualifiedly made, as though the writer unconsciously felt this fact of twofoldness to be so true that there was no need of raising in his mind a discussion as to their propriety. Such a question quite evidently did not occur to him at all, as it certainly would have had he considered the question of the essential parts of man to be anything else than definitely settled in favor of the material-immaterial view of the matter.

James 3, 26 contains another very clear statement of this conception of the matter. James there says, in speaking of works as the evidence of faith, "As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also."

Finally, this view prevails throughout the whole New Testament, and is the original and fundamental. There is an array of expressions--*πνεῦμα, ψυχὴ, πρὸν ὥσπερ, ὁ ἕως ἀνθρώπου*--- that are used for the special purpose of denoting the incorporeal in man in contradistinction to the corporeal. For the corporeal there is a list of terms in opposition to those given above--*σῶμα,*



ἡ δὲ ἔκ τῶν ἁποκρίσεων, ὁ ἔξω ἄνθρωπος. The very existence of these two classes of terms is proof sufficient of the fact that in the minds of the writers, as well as in those of the masses to whom, and for whom, they wrote, there existed a profound belief that man, the subject of the terms, is twofold, corporeal and incorporeal, mortal and immortal.

Having proven that the elements in man are two, can the statement now be made that the non-physical element is a class rather than a single element? Can it be rightly conceived of, not as a unit, but as a genus comprehending in itself as independent species, two lesser incorporeal entities? If it is capable of proof that soul and spirit are two independent existences, both belonging to the incorporeal class, then the sum of the essentials is three, and, the proof outlined above to the contrary notwithstanding, trichotomy is still correct. For the maintenance of our position, then, the duty of proving the unity of the immaterial is plain.

To demonstrate that soul and spirit are but two aspects of the same element, will be to establish quite securely this unity.

The original and the highest conception of the immaterial is that of the life-principle. This conception is termed the spirit, the Πνεῦμα, the πνεῦμα. It is that without which the body is dead. (cf. Jms. 3, 26). It is the absolute conception of the immaterial, the animating agency considered apart from the body which it vivifies. There is no other being with which it has to do, save God, its Maker. It is that aspect of the incorporeal which exists in solitary state, turned ever from the world of physical things, and forever toward its God. It is that which is termed (Job 27, 3) the רוּחַ אֱלֹהִים, as something which was given by God and which, of all things created here below, stands in closest relation to Him. It is the רוּחַ הַחַיָּה, that intangible, inexpressible something which proceeded from the nostrils of the Creator, and in some inconceivable way became resident in the clayey shell to which it imparts life.



We can scarcely hold that consciousness is this life-principle, for though we cannot define consciousness, except synonymously, we know that, irrespective of other considerations, it cannot be the vivifying agent, since consciousness itself depends upon the close relation of the animating principle and the physical organism. Disturb this delicate relation and consciousness suffers an eclipse; it is in abeyance, and is as far as we, or the subject himself, can prove, completely gone. (Though the writer is aware that subconsciousness can, and frequently does, persist during the absence of consciousness, yet it is, he believes, impossible to prove that it persists always during this absence.) Such is the case in coma, or following a stunning blow. Consciousness has retired, taking in her train all the faculties of the mind. Yet life remains; the spirit still imparts life; respiration continues, and no decomposition sets in, though the period of unconsciousness extend over days. Therefore, though the body be not conscious, yet it lives. Consciousness is itself, then, dependent on the life-principle, and is surpassed by the same. The former we can but vaguely conceive of; the latter escapes us entirely; exploring introspection itself returns empty-handed, as from a Thule inaccessible. This spirit is as inconceivable as the timeless, spaceless world which is its proper home. We can but affirm the existence of this impalpability.

Cried Job, "The breath of the Almighty hath given me life". (c.33,4). Therefore, because this spirit came from the nostrils of the Almighty Himself, it is immortal, dependent on nothing and no one for its continued existence, save the God who has endowed it with endless existence. For this same reason it returns at death to its Maker. At this time of death does God "gather unto himself his (man's) spirit and his breath" (Job 34,14); then "the spirit shall return unto God who gave it." (Eccl.12,7). Freed from the trammels of the body, it returns to the immaterial world whence it came.



Since the words  $\pi\alpha\rho\upsilon\varsigma$  and  $\pi\rho\epsilon\upsilon\mu\alpha$  represent, in the first sense, that principle by which we live, which at death parts company with the body, and without which we cannot live, the usage of the particular word  $\pi\rho\epsilon\upsilon\mu\alpha$  in John 19,30 to portray the immaterial in its departure from Christ's body at His death, appears at once to be the nicest possible selection. The becomingness of its usage there must be unquestioned, for death is precisely this abandonment of the body by this particular essence, following which, man is not man, but sundered earth and spirit.

In Luke 23,46, the dying Savior places His spirit into the hands of God, the Father, and again we are struck by the propriety of the use of this specific word  $\pi\rho\epsilon\upsilon\mu\alpha$ . How well it agrees with Solomon's inspired utterance, "The spirit shall return unto God who gave it"! How well with the thought of Gen. 2,7! From God came the principle of man's life, and Christ, the dying man, commends this essence of His human life to the care of God who gave it, though He Himself was this very God! ( $\text{Ὁ γὰρ καὶ ὁ πατὴρ ἔρ' ἐβούλευ}$  (John 10,30)). ---And it is His **spirit**, not His soul, which He commends to this divine care. It is always the spirit, and not the soul, that as vivifying principle, returns.

Stephen, Christianity's first martyr, following his Savior's example, with consistent accuracy bears out this idea, for, when sinking under the murderous blows of his persecutors, he cries with his dying breath, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." (Acts 7,59). Had he said "soul", our contention that spirit is the immaterial viewed as the life-principle would be shaken. "Spirit" is, however, the word he used. Back to God returns that which He gave--the breath of life, the spirit!

We are given a view in Hebr. 12,23 of the incorporeal dissociated from corporeality, and it is called spirit, as it must properly be since it is viewed as such--as that which returns to God at death. There is here no hint of resurrected corporeality, for the author of these words, having addressed those Christians who are still on earth,



proceeds to address those who are disembodied and in the presence of their Maker. It is, then, quite evidently a preresurrectional conception of those who have died and now exist in heaven, awaiting the Last Day. Their bodies lie in the grave. The other essential part, the spirit, has returned to the Giver, existing there by reason of its innate immortality, being a life-principle. -- For the reason, then, that God is the Giver and Receiver of spirits, He is quite properly called "The Father of Spirits." (Hebr. 12, 9).

In those passages of the New Testament which speak of Christ's casting out from the bodies of men the evil minions of Satan, these fallen angels are invariably referred to as "spirits" (cf. Matt. 8, 29: τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἀκαθάρτον). This fact is significant. Why are they never spoken of as "souls", except it be that they cannot be accurately described by that, but need the use of "spirit"? We know from Scripture that evil spirits were incorporealities existing without bodies. If this be true, then the Savior in speaking of them must have desired to express the idea of an abstract, intangible principle of vitality which has the inherent property of existence, or life, dependent on nothing and no one for continued existence, save God. If this was what He desired to express, as it must have been, then the expression He chose must have been one that meant precisely that. But this term is applied also to man. Must that not indicate the existence in him of an entity which can be accurately described by only that one word? If <sup>spirit</sup> it were merely the immaterial in general in man, would not the word "soul" do as well? <sup>when speaking of evil spirits?</sup> If that were the case, would this word not sometimes <sup>in this connection?</sup> be used? Why is "spirit" always used when the meaning can be nothing but the vital principle? The answer is, of course, that "soul" would not do, or it would be used. Two conclusions are to be drawn. In the first place, "spirit", must refer to the vital principle, to the breath of life; in the second, "soul" cannot refer to this, if accurately used. Accordingly, when "spirit" is used of man, it must refer, in its origin-



al and highest sense, to the life-principle, to the absolute conception of the immaterial.

The spirit, it has been said above, is that aspect of the incorporeal which is turned away from man and toward God. The second aspect of this essential factor is that which is concerned not only with God, but also with the physical world in general. This second aspect is called soul, and is the manifestation of the spirit through the body. This soul has, in turn, two aspects of its own. The first of these is the **rational soul**, and is the manifestation of the spirit through the brain and nervous system as thought-life. The second aspect may be termed the **animal soul**, and is the manifestation of the spirit through the vital organs and the body in general as animal-life, or, mere existence as vivified materiality. (The animal soul is common also to irrational creatures. As possessors of this, they are spoken of as "having soul". (Gen. 1, 20).) These two aspects, inasmuch as they are the manifestations of the same immaterial unit through the same material unit, and inasmuch as they are equally dependent on both essential parts for existence, are so closely allied as scarcely to warrant separation, save in the respect, of course, that the rational is the higher and nobler of the two. This distinction will, however, be maintained during the succeeding paragraph, following which it will be dropped as no longer necessary. Then the greater notion, "soul", will be adhered to, with the tacit understanding that the rational and animal aspects are contained therein.

But let us consider this soul-of-the-two-aspects which is the manifestation of the spirit. Why is it regarded as manifestation? Because it represents our only means of knowing the presence within a man's body of a spirit. If we perceive a man thinking, feeling, judging, reasoning, remembering, giving us proof of his awareness of his awareness of his own existence and of that of his fellow-creatures, then we know with certainty that there abides within him a life-prin-



ciple, that he lives. And why are we certain? Because we recognize these activities as the rational manifestations of the spirit's presence within him. This is the "rational soul". If these manifestations are absent, we judge that there is no spirit present, that the man is dead. Only continual respiration and non-mortification, themselves the manifestations called the "animal soul", can tell us otherwise. All these manifestations, both the rational and the animal, regarded as a whole, are soul, which is, then, the spirit manifested, or, the spirit as our senses perceive it. The spirit is accordingly the manifesting agent, the body the manifestor, and the soul is the result, the manifestation. (However, the writer is not forgetting, let it be noted, that the body is not the mere tool of the spirit, but he remembers that it is also, as Quenstedt urged so long ago, an essential part of the composite called man.) The soul is, therefore, rather the life which one is, rather than the life which one has as a gift from the Creator. The soul is the individual.

The next concern is to find, if possible, a positive answer for the question, "Can proof be brought to demonstrate the truth of the statement that the soul is the manifestation of the spirit?"

The establishment of this point of the argument is, admittedly, difficult. This is true, however, only for the reason that Scripture is not very explicit in this respect. Still this contention is manifestly correct, in view not only of the fact that Scripture indicates it, but also because of the fact that it is not contradictory to Scripture. It is based on four considerations, each tending powerfully to substantiate this view. They are the following.

- 1) This view is necessitated by a consideration of Gen. 2, 7.
- 2) This view is logical, especially in its bearing upon sin.
- 3) The great probability of its correctness is indicated by its frequent substitutionary usage as a synonym for "a man", "a person", "an individual."



- 4) It demonstrates its correctness by its agreement with various Scripture passages.

Each of these points will be considered in its order, objections being met during the progress of the discussion.

To prove this contention, we must revert once more to Gen. 2, 7. It is stated there that after God had formed man of the dust of the ground, and had breathed into his nostrils the life-giving breath, "man became a living soul." Before the entrance of the spirit, man was distinct from the clod only by reason of his form. There was no life there; there was therefore no manifestation of life possible; and man was simple clay. But with the coming of the spirit, what a marvelous change! He was the naturally inanimate made animate by the power of the Omnipotent. He was then, and only then, a living soul, a spirit made manifest to the senses of fellow-creatures by a body which was not only a means of manifestation, but also an essential part of him. He now **had** a spirit, and now **was** a living soul. He **was** now an individual.

This soul is then the result of the coming together of a body and a spirit. Without the spirit, the body would be without that which is to be made manifest through the body. Ergo, there could be no soul. Also, without the body, the spirit would be lacking a means of manifestation, hence there could be nothing manifested, and again, therefore, there could be no soul. Where there is no soul, there is, of course, no individual. -- The existence of a soul therefore requires the existence together of a body and a spirit. Briefly, the existence of a soul depends upon the existence of a man (who is, essentially, body and spirit). Negatively, where there is no man, there is no soul.

But, the objection is advanced, if the soul viewed as the spirit made manifest through the body, is dependent for its existence upon the union of a spirit and a body, then it follows that when this union is disrupted the soul simply ceases to be. At death, therefore, the soul must vanish and be temporarily out of existence until the



Day of Resurrection. Eternal retribution or reward begins, then, not, as Scripture teaches, at the instant of death, but only after the Resurrection. Scripture teaches, then, that eternal punishment or reward is received by the lost or redeemed sinner as a man, as an individual, as a soul, and at the instant of death (Luke 23, 43, "thou", as an individual, not "as to thy spirit"; "today", i.e., manifestly, immediately after death); whereas our present view seems to contradict all this.

Cessation of soul is, however, not the case for two reasons, the first of which is, of course, because Scripture says so. Therefore it is true whether we understand it or not. Scripture teaches that personality does not cease, and personality, or individuality, is the soul--the spirit made manifest. This non-cessation we draw from the Savior's words concerning Dives and Lazarus in the other world. This scene must have been presented by Him as occurring prior to the Resurrection, for Dives' kindred are pictured as still existing on earth. The bodies of Dives and Lazarus must accordingly have been still the dust into which they were resolved at death. Despite this fact, however, Dives and Lazarus are two distinct persons, and recognize each other as such. The difference is more than that between mere existences, too. There is precisely the same distinction to be made between them as there is between two men on earth--that of individuality. Therefore there can be no interregnum in the existence of the soul; this existence is both continuous and eternal.----For this uninterrupted continuity of the soul "The New Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge" gives the reason to be the possession by the soul of the spirit as the principle of its existence, and argues that since the spirit is immortal, the soul must likewise be immortal. This reason, however, does not appeal. It does not ring true. One can scarcely avoid the suspicion that the author of that statement was not unreservedly a dichotomist, for by that statement the soul is raised almost to the plane of an essential part. If the reason given by the Encyclopedia be true, then the soul's indep-



endence of the body must follow, and if independent of the body, then the soul is practically an essential part, belonging really in a class with the body, inasmuch as both are dependent on the spirit for vivification. Since this position is untenable, however, for the reason that the body is as much an essential part as the spirit, and for the reason that the soul is dependent on both essential parts (inasmuch as it is a manifestation of the spirit through the body), the preferable and probably true explanation is the following. This is also the second reason (referred to above) why the soul never ceases.

When we attempt to deal with this phase of the situation, we are forced simultaneously to view things according to two entirely different aspects, one of which is an almost wholly unknowable quantity. The lifeless body we must conceive of as here on earth, separated by infinity from the spirit until the Judgment Day. In other words, from the viewpoint of the body, the body is in this world while the spirit is in the other. If, however, we speak from the viewpoint of the spirit, existing in a world both spaceless and timeless, we must grant that intervening time cannot exist for it. A sequence of events is an impossibility in a timeless world. It is therefore already joined again to its body, for Resurrection Day is already upon it at the instant of its departure from the world of time to that which is timeless. More properly, and strictly, speaking, there is, from the timeless point of view of the spirit, no separation of itself from the body at all, for the sequence of events represented by disjunction and reunion cannot exist simultaneously, and if not simultaneously, then not at all. This being true, there is no necessity for the cessation of the spirit's manifestation through the body, and the soul enjoys, therefore, uninterrupted tenure of office in its capacity as the manifestation of the spirit. ---We are, of course, confronted here with an inconceivable paradox, a body dissociated from its spirit, lifeless, and decaying before our very eyes; and, in the same instant, that body not here, but living again, glorified in one case, condemned in the other; and in conjunction



with its spirit. We have this incomprehensible, yet true, statement to contend with, that something both is and is not. But the fault lies with us, if we wish to speak of faults, for we labor under the insuperable handicap of being forced to deal with the infinite by means of a finite brain. We are forced to conceive of timeless and spaceless concepts in terms of concepts cast in molds of both time and space. We are then consequently forced to a choice---either madness, or a recognition of the futility of the attempt. If we are wise, we choose the latter, which choice does not, however, invalidate our maintenance of the fact, despite our admitted failure to understand it.

But as to the Resurrection, does not this view obviate the necessity of it? Is not then the spirit already reunited to the body prior to our Resurrection Day? It is, indeed, but not as far as the temporal side of the matter is concerned. As far as the world of time is concerned, the body is still in the grave and in that world of time, and will so remain until that world of time comes to an end. Even when the body is raised, it will still require, from the temporal viewpoint, God's great power to reunite it to the spirit, for while laws of time endure, the body can not make the necessary transition from the temporal to the timeless world. Time intervenes an insurmountable barrier, the levelling of which will require its Creator's own omnipotence. When God has accomplished that, then He will have reunited body and spirit both from the spirit's point of view and from that of the body. That event will mark the completed reunion of the two in every respect.

The second reason for our maintaining that soul is spirit manifested is that this view is logical, especially in its bearing upon sin.

The spirit, the ~~Wiz~~ ~~Wiz~~ ~~Wiz~~, cannot of itself sin. Every sin of man, in the final analysis, owes its germination to the corrupted flesh, and to the sinful lusts thereof. The sin of man is therefore a result effected only by the material. If, then, the spirit existed without the



body, it would be without breeding place for sin and would be without the material means for the accomplishment of sin. Accordingly, if the spirit existed absolutely, a human sin of the spirit would be inconceivable, for it would be a contradiction. The commission of a sin in this fallen world of ours implies the instrumentality of the sinful flesh. Again, therefore, if the spirit existed independently of the sinful flesh, it could not sin. On the other hand, neither can the body of itself sin, for, while something inanimate might conceivably be a sin, yet it cannot actively sin. The commission of a sin therefore also implies the agency of life, and life implies the spirit. Ergo, a dead body cannot actively sin. But man, the composite of these two parts, sins, for the body, created originally sinless as an essential part, has become tainted with sin, and by inheritance all flesh today is corrupted. Since this corrupted body of his is vivified, every manifestation of man's vivifying spirit through the body must be a corrupted manifestation. The activity of the spirit through the body cannot be otherwise than like a carpenter, who using inferior tools, obtains inferior results, tho he himself be an expert craftsman. Therefore the spirit's manifestations through the body in thought, word, and deed are the sins which man commits; these manifestations are the life that he is; they are the "he"; therefore "he" is sinful, and "he" will be punished. Man as a constituted being is hopelessly a sinner, and the soul is the primary seat of his sin, the body being the secondary inasfar as it furnishes the corrupt instrumentality. Nor can man hope, for the sake of purity, to cure the cause of his sin by ascetic practices, by minimizing the body, as the Gnostics hoped to do. As long as that body endures at all, man still has a sinful soul; his every thought is sinful (Gen. 8, 21); and his manifested spirit constantly sins and is in a state of sin. Therefore he is by nature a child of wrath (Eph. 2, 3), and needs redemption for both body and soul. Since it is this aspect of the immaterial which is guilty of sin, and is the seat of sin, a man's soul will someday be required of him (Luke 12, 20) to receive its meed



of everlasting punishment. But since the soul is merely one aspect of an entity, and since the spirit is the other aspect of that entity, it follows that the spirit, too, is guilty, needs redemption, and, if unredeemed, will suffer in the after world, both spirit and soul, as well as resurrected flesh, being retained eternal captives in the pit of hell. "From the soul of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it", said Isaiah (c.1,6) of the sinful body of Israel, and this is true of every man today. He needs a Redeemer who can cleanse every aspect of him, for in every respect is he corrupted.

Temporal death is therefore one of the penalties which man has brought upon himself. Because his soul is sinful, that soul must perish from the world. Because this sinful soul is his, man must suffer, in time, the dissolution of the tie that binds soul and spirit into a whole. He must suffer the supreme mortal punishment---total disintegration of individuality, the dread of which forever stands like a hooded spectre at the fringe of unregenerated consciousness.

The third consideration which substantiates this view of the immaterial as manifested spirit is, that the great probability of its correctness is indicated by the frequent substitutionary use of it as a synonym for "a man", "a person", "an individual." (Lev.23,30; ezek.18,20; Acts 2,41; Acts 3,23; etc.; etc.) "Probability", not "certainty", is the word used in the preceding sentence, and it is used for caution's sake, since the matter cannot be incontrovertibly settled. It could conceivably not have been used synonymously. Metonymy is the only other possibility, the immaterial part being taken for the composite whole. But why metonymically? The expression is then only a figure, only figuratively true. If it can be correctly used synonymously, then it is literally true, strictly accurate. Our contention is that man, the individual <sup>soul</sup> is, that as body and spirit combine to form man, so they combine to form soul. Man and soul are, therefore, true synonyms in the final senses of the two terms. But if they are synonymous, is it not



reasonable to think, is it not highly probable, that they were used synonymously rather than metonymically? In fact, does it not hardly, and only hardly, miss the positively certain?

If, pursuant to this line of reasoning, we conceive of the soul as the manifestation of the spirit, as the individual life, then the nicety of the usage of the term  $\psi\upsilon\chi\acute{\alpha}$  in John 10, 11 appears at once. This represents the fourth, and final, consideration substantiating our contention. Christ, this passage says, "giveth His life for the sheep." Not to God did He give it, as He gave His spirit (Luke 23, 46), not did He merely surrender it, as He did His spirit (John 19, 30), but His soul He gave for His sheep. His spirit He could not, as a man, give for a purpose, for a man has no control over the spirit. The spirit returns immediately to God, as God has ordered it. But His soul, being His individual property as a man, He had the liberty to give for whatever purpose He chose. For His sheep, then, He suffered the dissolution in Him of the union between spirit and body, and since that disruption meant the end of His soul as far as men and earth were concerned, He really gave it up for them. As far as the world was concerned, and as far as His own human relation to the world went, all that was to represent Christ, the man, was one half of Him--His body. His personality, His individuality, all that was peculiarly His own as a man, He gave up, suffered its vanishing. His spirit was in the Father's hands; His body a corpse within the tomb; His soul had vanished from the world, had ceased as far as men were concerned; and all this was done as a voluntary sacrifice that the souls of men might continue forever above, and not below.--- Therefore also the propriety of its usage in John 15, 13, where the same expression is used particularly of men ( $\tauὶ δένει ψυχῶν$ ) as evidence of the ultimate love. That same loss of the individuality is there, that same cessation of the spirit's manifestation, that same uselessness of the body for its intended purpose--the manifestation of the spirit.



Christ, having given up His  $\psi\upsilon\chi\acute{\eta}$ , His soul, His life, was dead. Therefore it was His soul that died, the "he" in Him. Let us note how well this agrees with other passages of Scripture. Nowhere does Scripture say that the spirit dies, or succumbs to death, for it returns to God and remains forever there. But the soul is spoken of as succumbing to death (Ps. 116, 8: "Thou hast delivered my soul ( $\psi\upsilon\chi\acute{\eta}$ ) from death"), as dying. Conversely, it is spoken of as living. Isaiah 55, 3: "Hear, and your soul shall live," i.e., the real "you", the individual "you" that you are, your ego, shall live.

With this, our contention that soul and spirit are but two terms used to express two aspects of the same entity, is concluded. This <sup>being</sup> having been proved, the unity of the immaterial has been proved. Before the subject is left, however, an attempt will be made to show that the immaterial cannot be viewed as anything other than a unit. This negative attempt will be a demonstration of the truth of the contention that it is impossible to view the soul as an essential part. If this is successful, then there can be only one of the two aspects left to be an essential part---the spirit.

The reason why the soul cannot be viewed as an essential part follows immediately upon the proof of the statement that the soul is the manifestation of the spirit. Having been proved to be such, it has been proven that the soul does not exist per se. If the soul is a manifestation, as it is, then it is clear that it cannot exist separately from that which it manifests, for the very nature of a manifestation demands that it be dependent on that which it manifests, and if dependent, then it cannot be independent. Since, then, the soul is a manifestation of the spirit through the body, and since it came into existence as a result of the union of body and soul, it is dependent on both for its existence, and if dependent, then it cannot have the independence demanded by an essential part. The soul, therefore, cannot be an essential part. This leaves but one aspect of the immaterial which can



be an essential part. This one possibility is the spirit. The spirit, viewed as the absolute conception of the immaterial, dependent on nothing (save the God who endowed it with independent existence) for its existence, can be an essential part, and is this by reason of its simultaneous independence and existence in the composite whole.

Finally, then, since soul and spirit are merely two aspects of the same immateriality, the immateriality of which they are merely aspects of must be a unit. Negatively, since the soul cannot be an essential<sup>-ial</sup> part, that aspect of the immaterial which it represents cannot be an essential part; there cannot then be such a possibility as a division of the immaterial into two essential parts; and again the immaterial must be a unit. If, however, the immaterial is a unit, then that, plus the corporeal, produces the sum of two essential parts, and dichotomy is inevitably established, while trichotomy as inevitably falls.

The obligation still remains, however, of producing a satisfactory explanation of those passages which seem to speak of three component parts. These passages fall into two classes, the first of which is the parallelistic.

Of this class Luke 1, 46, 47 is, perhaps, the most familiar example: "My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Savior." The slightest acquaintance with Scripture must have made the reader aware of the fact that parallelism, or the use of the repetend,<sup>is as</sup> is characteristic of Hebrew poetry as rhyme and meter are of our own. It seems to have been impossible for the Hebrew to rise to the heights of emotional expression without bursting into this type of ecstatic utterance. It was simply an ineradicable national impulse. What wonder, therefore, that Mary, overcome with holy wonder at the miracle to be performed through her--a miracle which had been awaited by the women of four thousand years--should make this typical response to the salutation of Elizabeth. It would have been unnatural had she responded in any other way. She would then have been contradicting the hat-



ural impulse of her race!

In the same category belongs Isaiah 26,9: "With my soul have I desired thee in the night; yea, with my spirit within me will I seek thee early." Not only can we note by a mere reading that the language is manifestly intended to be poetical, but the prophet himself says, in verse one: "In that day shall this song be sung in the land of Judah." He then proceeds to give us the song, which is, of course, Hebrew poetry, and, as such, <sup>si</sup>consisting of a succession of parallelisms membrorum, both members stating the same <sup>idea</sup>thought and referring to the same thought.

The second class is composed of those passages which make a distinction between soul and spirit, but do not indicate a separation of them. The first of these passages is Hebr. 4, 12: "For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart." This passage does incontrovertibly distinguish between soul and spirit. There is admittedly a distinction to be made, but not a separation. As Quenstedt says, "Non enim omnis διαίρεσις καὶ μεμελμένος est distinctio essentialis," or, more succinctly, "Nicht jede Unterscheidung ist eine Scheidung". There is precisely this distinction to be made: on the one hand, the vivifying agency, and, on the other, the manifestation of it. There, however, the differentiation must cease, for both finally terminate and merge in the same immateriality. Moreover, the differentiation does cease there. We have behind that statement not only the whole weight of our argument, but also the high authority of Dr. Thayer. Under the word μεμελμένος, in the second sub-head, he has the following to say, the quotation being entirely embodied herein: "2. a separation: ἀχρι μεμελμένου ψυχῆς κ. πνεύματος, which many take actively: 'up to the dividing' i.e. so far as to cleave asunder or separate; but it is not easy to understand what the dividing of the 'soul' is.



Hence it is more correct, I think, and more in accordance with the context, to take the word passively (just as other verbal subst. ending in *μός* are used, e.g. *ἀγιασμός, πειρασμός*), and translate even unto the division, etc., i.e. to that most hidden spot, the dividing line between soul and spirit, where the one passes into the other, Heb. 4, 12".

The distinguishing was done, quite apparently, for the sake of emphasis. The writer of this epistle was so convinced of the power of the Word that he needed just such a startling statement adequately to express his profound conviction. Nor could he have made a stronger statement. Imagine the keenness of a blade that could sever to the dividing point of a substance and its manifestation, between the swaying tree and the motivating wind! The two ideas are so inseparable, the thought of a wind-swayed tree being inconceivable without the implied companion-idea of a swaying wind. What astounding sharpness must be required to sunder cause and effect! This view of the matter as being the separation of inseparables is borne faithfully out by the following words, "(and to the dividing asunder) of the joints and marrow." Though joints and marrow are commonly thought of as decidedly belonging together, and as something which can scarcely be separated, yet here is a sword whose edge is easily able to do that very thing.

The second example of the class under discussion is I Thess. 5, 23: "And I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless." Here again a perfectly legitimate distinction is made, for there is a distinction to be made--but no essential separation. If every distinction were to be considered an essential separation into constituent parts, then Luke 10, 27 ("Love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind") would prove a fourfold division of the human essentials! But Paul desired that the Thessalonians realize how earnestly he wished<sup>-ed</sup> their salvation, how he longed that they be kept blameless in every possible respect. Hence this positive, forceful, and thorough state-



ment of his feelings.

Scripture as a whole also uses the two terms spirit and soul, one term in one passage, and the other in another, to indicate exactly one and the same thing. This is the interchangeable or synonymic usage of the terms. Both terms are used to represent the return of consciousness or life, or of spirit, as one chooses, after death had occurred (cf. Luke 8, 55 with IKgs. 17, 21, 22). In the sense of being comforted as to the inner man, the two expressions are synonymously used in Gen. 45, 26, 27 and Ps. 23, 3. Rev. 6, 9 is a loose usage of the word "souls" to express the same thought of disembodied spirits in heaven which ~~are~~ <sup>is</sup> contained in Hebr. 12, 23, and expressed there by "spirits". (It is but honest to confess that the writer has presumed to differ with Dr. Graebner regarding this adiaphoron. Dr. Graebner has said (Theol. Quart. III, 133) that both terms represent a case of loose, or interchangeable, usage. The writer prefers to say "souls" (Rev. 6, 9) is the loose usage (rather than "spirits" (Hebr. 12, 23) also) for the expression of this idea, since he believes that he has shown "spirit" to be <sup>the</sup> strictly accurate term).

Again, the two terms are interchangeably used to express emotional states. In John 12, 27, the soul is troubled; in John 13, 21, Jesus is "troubled in spirit". In Job 27, 2 the soul is vexed (or bitter); in IKgs. 21, 5, the spirit is sad. For mental depression both terms are likewise employed (Ps. 51, 17: broken spirit; Ps. 143, 12: afflicted soul) (cf. also Ps. 42, 6; Gen. 41, 8).

In view of these passages, therefore, the statement cannot be made that the Scriptural usage of two terms indicates a twofoldness of the immaterial in man. They represent the same unit.

Nor does the Pauline usage of  $\psi\upsilon\chi\iota\kappa\acute{o}\varsigma$  and  $\piνεύματικ\acute{o}\varsigma$  denote two incorporeal essentials. In the passages in which the terms occur, Paul is referring to the topic which interested his pen so frequently--regeneration. The word  $\psi\upsilon\chi\iota\kappa\acute{o}\varsigma$ , "soulish", he uses to denote unregenerate man, and  $\piνεύματικ\acute{o}\varsigma$  to designate regenerate man or man after



the influence of the Holy Ghost has affected him. These are the meanings he has for these terms. (cf. I Cor. 2, 14; 2, 15; 15, 44, 46). The antithesis is always regenerate, unregenerate; corrupt, incorrupt; sinful, sanctified. In fact, the whole conception of the natural corruption, and of spiritual regeneration, is prevalent in Paul's writings. (cf. also Rom. cc. 7.8)

Our argument is now concluded. It has been demonstrated that man is a material-immaterial creature; in the second place, that the immaterial is a unit and can be nothing else; and, lastly, that there is no Scriptural passage contradictory to dichotomy, whereas there are many supporting it. For these reasons dichotomy is the Scriptural teaching. Three further facts have, however, become manifest during the contention: 1) there is an unmistakeable dearth of Scriptural evidence to support trichotomy; 2) it is absolutely untenable, for every attempt at a threefold division leads ultimately to the anti-Scriptural, to the illogical, or to the impossible; 3) those very passages which have been advanced as proof-texts for trichotomy are easily susceptible to satisfactory and wholly acceptable explanations entirely in harmony with the Scripture and with the dichotomous view. For these reasons any species of trichotomy is anti-Scriptural.

#### SOURCES.

- "Positive Dogmatik"---Lange.
- "Compendium Theologiae Positivae" (I. II)--Baier.
- "Cosmology" (Theol. Quart. III)--Dr. A. Graebner.
- "System der Christlichen Heilswahrheit"--Dr. Alexander.
- "New Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge"--Schaff-Herzog.
- "Hebrew-English Lexicon"--Gesenius.
- "Greek-English Lexicon"--Thayer.
- "Christliche Dogmatik"--W. Schmidt.
- "Doctrinal Theology"--Dr. Dau
- "International Standard Bible Encyclopedia"--Dr. J. Orr; Gen. Ed.
- "A Dictionary of the Bible"--Dr. J. Hastings